

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8464  
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UNCLAS TUNIS 1489

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, TS

SUBJ: CHECKLIST FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS VISITORS:  
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

REF: STATE A-855

1. FOLLOWING COMMENTS OR SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL POINTS ARE  
KEYED TO REPAIR, NON-ESSENTIAL WORDS OMITTED.

A. PAJT I, SECTION A - BACKGROUND, P 1: SUGGEST  
CHANGE FIRST LINE TO SHOW THAT "MOST," NOT ALL, COUNTRIES  
BENEFITTING FROM BOOM.

P 2, BOTTOM: GOVERNMENT CANNOT, PROBABLY SHOULD  
NOT, BE GIVEN TASK OF IDENTIFYING ALL SALES OPPORTUNITIES.  
SUGGEST CHANGE TO "SALES OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WE IN  
GOVERNMENT CAN HELP TO IDENTIFY FOR YOU."

B. SECTION B - TIMING: BUSINESS VISITORS SHOULD BE  
ENCOURAGED TO AVOID TRIPS DURING RAMADAN.

C. SECTION C - LANGUAGE: KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH IS  
WIDESPREAD IN MIDDLE EAST, BUT IN MAGHREB (TUNISIA TO  
MOROCCO) FRENCH IS COMMERCIAL LANGUAGE, RELATIVELY FEW  
SENIOR BUSINESSMEN OR BUSINESS CONTACTS HAVE NECESSARY  
COMMAND OF ENGLISH TO CONDUCT SERIOUS BUSINESS. CALLING  
CARDS, CORRESPONDENCE AND LITERATURE SHOULD BE IN FRENCH  
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

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D. SECTION D - U.S. PRODUCTS: RELIABILITY, SPEED,  
AND COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION ARE KEY FACTORS WHERE U.S.  
FIRMS ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE RELATIVE TO EUROPEAN COMPETITORS.

FOLLOW UP: U.S. FIRMS NEED TO BE PARTICULARLY QUICK  
IN RESPONDING TO CORRESPONDENCE IN VIEW OF DELAYS IN MAIL  
SERVICE COMPARED TO EUROPE.

2. SUGGESTED TEXT FOR PART II: TUNISIA - TRADE POLICY:  
TUNISIA MAINTAINS STRICT IMPORT AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE  
CONTROLS. MOST GOODS REQUIRE IMPORT LICENSES ACQUIRED  
BY THE TUNISIAN BUYERS FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMERCE,  
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY, AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE  
AUTHORIZATIONS FROM THE CENTRAL BANK. IMPORTS FROM A  
DESIGNATED LIST OF PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT LIBERALIZED  
AND CAN BE EFFECTED BY MEANS OF IMPORT CERTIFICATE  
OBTAINED BY IMPORTERS DIRECTLY FROM COMMERCIAL BANKS.  
TRADE AGREEMENTS AND LINES OF CREDIT FAVOR IMPORTS FROM  
A NUMBER OF EUROPEAN, ARAB AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES, BUT  
OTHERWISE THERE IS NO OVERT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GOODS  
OF AMERICAN ORIGIN IN NORMAL COMMERCE. IN GENERAL, US  
COMMERCIAL EXPORTS TO TUNISIA ARE SHOWING CONSIDERABLE  
STRENGTH IN SPITE OF THE WELL-ESTABLISHED TRADE TIES WITH  
FRANCE AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.  
OTHER FACTORS - U.S. FIRMS MAY BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN A  
HIGH LEVEL OF EXPORTS OF MACHINERY, INDUSTRIAL RAW  
MATERIAL AND COMPONENTS TO TUNISIA THROUGH INVESTMENTS  
HERE. ALTHOUGH TUNISIAN MARKET IS SMALL, TUNISIA ENJOYS  
PREFERENTIAL ACCESS FOR ITS GOODS INTO THE LARGE EUROPEAN  
COMMON MARKET AND OTHER ARAB/AFRICAN STATES. FOREIGN  
INVESTMENT, INCLUDING THAT FROM THE US, FOR EXPORT  
INDUSTRIES IS FAVORED BY SPECIAL LEGISLATION, TUNISIAN  
GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMS, AND AVAILABILITY OF A  
RELATIVELY CHEAP AND PRODUCTIVE LABOR FORCE AND LOCAL  
SOURCES OF ENERGY.

3. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE 50 COPIES OF CHECKLIST  
WHEN PUBLISHED.  
SEELYE

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